532 /480 cont./

Figure 11. Guanaco (José Miguel).

[821] Figure 12. (A): blue jaguar who lives in the sky (personification of the spots on the moon) getting ready to eat the moon (B) and the sun (C), thus bringing on an eclipse.

Chapter XIV

The Treatment of Illnesses

Sorcerers and Remedies

756 178 [123] Sorcerers. Medicine men have become so rare among the Chiriguano that I could not get to know a one during my whole trip. Only on the upper Pilcomayo did they allude in front of me to a talented paye who lived in a nearby village.

Although great sorcerers endowed with supernatural powers and surrounded with great prestige no longer exist, there still must be in each village a man or woman capable of curing certain illnesses and of pronouncing incantations.

A scene I witnessed at Timboy (Salado River, upper Pilcomayo) demonstrates well that the profession of sorcerer, less important though it may be, has nevertheless not disappeared. [122] I was living in the home of a Bolivian half-breed whose child's body was covered with purulent pimples. His parents began by appealing to my medical knowledge, but I declared myself incompetent to treat this case or any other. They then 75 [824] called an old Indian woman, who appeared one morning with a plant in her hand, a kind of wild pumpkin which the half-breeds call sandía del monte. This plant, crushed and mixed with hot water, is used for external washing. They stretched the child out on the ground and commanded him to hold himself motionless. The old woman sat down near him and began to mutter inaudible incantations which she interrupted only to spit often on the limbs of the little patient. Then she would take up her recitation again, at the same time spreading the saliva over his body from head to feet. Nordenskiold (5, p. 44,

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Fig. 16) was present at an analogous treatment also practiced /481/ by a medicine woman on a child at Yumbia, not far from the Salado. She rubbed him and blew on his body (1).

[113] [192]

1. In the Diccionario Chiriguano-Español y Español-Chiriguano, etc. (p. 72), we find the word hunga translated "to rub, to massage" and the sentence Iiyari Ierungarunga tein, iróí á Ie with the following meaning: "My grandmother rubbed me enough, but I did not get well." The medicine women, add the authors of the dictionary, use the word hunga to express the act of rubbing with the hand any painful part of the body, especially the chest, without any remedy other than the saliva they spit on their hand. These women attribute a special virtue to saliva. [827]

755 752 The sick boy's father told me that, once suffering from prolonged headaches, he had had recourse to a sorceress, an old woman with woolly hair, who was called the Samba. She sucked the place where the ache was localized and drew out worms from it. The half-breed got well, of course.

757 [825] In the toldería of Ñawirenda, where there was a child ill with fever, his mother had made him eat crushed garrapatas (ticks). The unfortunate child's lips were purple from it.

756 755 [121] I shall devote a special study to Chiriguano medicine men in a future volume of this Review. Meanwhile I shall limit myself to describing, according to the Diccionario Chiriguano-Español y Español-Chiriguano (pp. 166-167), the way in which these powerful personages customarily proceed when they are called to the bedside of a sick person. I am forced to have recourse to the observations made by another for lack of having been able to be present myself at the spectacle which Father Giannechini evokes with as much accuracy as vivacity. The great Chiriguano paye are now all in the Ivoka where they take